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Sen. Kuipers joins colleagues in pushing early childhood learning initiatives

LANSING – Sen. Wayne Kuipers, R-Holland, along with some of his Senate Republican colleagues today unveiled legislation that would prevent early learning failure and give pupils the skills they need to succeed both in school and life.

The package of legislation would ensure that students master basic skills to be successful in the classroom, encourage alliances among home, parents and school, and provide training for teachers to start prevention and intervention programs.

The initiative is being pushed by Sen. Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, who is a former teacher and school psychologist. Kuipers, who chairs the Senate Education Committee, joined Cassis and other senators in announcing the initiative today.

“When we ensure our kids are succeeding in school from an early age, we’re helping ensure they aren’t engaging in risky behavior when they’re adolescents,” Kuipers said. “We’re also ensuring that the children are not being put into special-education programs and thus greatly increasing costs for schools.”

Kuipers’ legislation would require that 25 percent of a district’s AT-RISK funds be used for early intervention if the school building or district has a learning-disabled population greater than the state average and isn’t meeting adequate yearly progress.

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